

What is claimed is:

1. A method for treating a subject afflicted with a fear-related disorder comprising administering to the subject a therapeutically effective amount of a gastrin-releasing peptide receptor agonist.
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2. The method of claim 1, wherein the subject is human.
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3. The method of claim 1, wherein the fear-related disorder is a phobia.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the fear-related disorder is chronic anxiety.
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5. The method of claim 1, wherein the fear-related disorder is a panic attack.
- 20 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the fear-related disorder is post-traumatic stress disorder.
- 25 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the fear-related disorder is autism.
8. A method for inhibiting in a subject the onset of a fear-related disorder resulting from exposure to a traumatic experience comprising administering a prophylactically effective amount of a gastrin-releasing peptide receptor agonist to the subject prior to and/or following the traumatic experience.
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9. The method of claim 8, wherein the subject is human.
- 5 10. The method of claim 8, wherein the fear-related disorder is a phobia.
11. The method of claim 8, wherein the fear-related disorder is chronic anxiety.
- 10 12. The method of claim 8, wherein the fear-related disorder is a panic attack.
13. The method of claim 8, wherein the fear-related disorder is post-traumatic stress disorder.
- 15 14. The method of claim 8, wherein the agonist is administered to the subject prior to the traumatic experience.
- 20 15. The method of claim 14, wherein the traumatic experience is military combat.
- 25 16. The method of claim 8, wherein the agonist is administered to the subject after the traumatic experience.
17. The method of claim 16, wherein the traumatic experience is a physical assault.
- 30 18. An article of manufacture comprising (a) a packaging material having therein a gastrin-releasing peptide receptor agonist, and (b) a

label indicating a use for the agonist in treating, and/or inhibiting the onset of, a fear-related disorder in a subject.

- 5 19. A nucleic acid comprising a gastrin-releasing peptide gene, wherein the gene has inserted into it, either at its start or stop codon, a polypeptide-encoding sequence, wherein the polypeptide is not gastrin-releasing peptide.
- 10 20. A bacterial artificial chromosome (BAC) comprising the nucleic acid of claim 20.
- 15 21. A transgenic animal whose somatic cells have stably integrated therein a nucleic acid comprising a gastrin-releasing peptide gene, wherein the gene has inserted into it, either at its start or stop codon, a polypeptide-encoding sequence, wherein the polypeptide is not gastrin-releasing peptide, and wherein the polypeptide is specifically expressed in the animal's amygdala.
- 20 22. The transgenic animal of claim 22, wherein the animal is a mouse.
- 25 23. A method for producing a transgenic animal whose amygdaloid cells specifically express an exogenous polypeptide, which method comprises producing a transgenic animal by introducing into an oocyte an exogenous DNA so that the exogenous DNA is stably integrated into the oocyte, and permitting the resulting oocyte to mature into a viable
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animal, wherein (a) the animal's somatic cells have the exogenous DNA stably integrated therein, (b) the exogenous DNA comprises a gastrin-releasing peptide gene, wherein the gene has inserted into it, either at its start or stop codon, an exogenous polypeptide-encoding sequence, and the exogenous polypeptide is not gastrin-releasing peptide, and (c) the exogenous polypeptide is specifically expressed in the animal's amygdala.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein the animal is a mouse.